

University of Wollongong Research Online

University of Wollongong Thesis Collection
1954-2016

University of Wollongong Thesis Collections

2007

Career commitment in film production in the Australian film industry: a study using grounded theory

Michael Jones
University of Wollongong

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/theses>

University of Wollongong

Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following: This work is copyright. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised, without the permission of the author. Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material.

Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

Unless otherwise indicated, the views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Wollongong.

Recommended Citation

Jones, Michael, Career commitment in film production in the Australian film industry: a study using grounded theory, PhD thesis, School of Management and Marketing, University of Wollongong, 2007.
<http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/37>

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au

NOTE

This online version of the thesis may have different page formatting and pagination from the paper copy held in the University of Wollongong Library.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

COPYRIGHT WARNING

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site. You are reminded of the following:

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material. Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

**Career Commitment in Film Production in the Australian
Film Industry – A Study Using Grounded Theory**

PhD Thesis

School of Management and Marketing

Faculty of Commerce

University of Wollongong

Wollongong, Australia

Michael Jones

2007

Certification

I, Michael Larsen Jones, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the School of Management and Marketing, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael" followed by a stylized, cursive "J" with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Jones

Monday, 21 April 2008

ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a grounded theory study of the Australian Film Industry. The study set out to examine the performance effectiveness of production workers in the Australian Film Industry. Following the guidelines of grounded theory it became evident that there was an issue existing within the Australian Film Industry regarding career commitment. This issue arose because, while film workers felt they work very hard putting up with harsh work conditions, they perceived their rewards to be inadequate and not commensurate with their work efforts. This study looks at a case of career commitment in the Australian Film Industry. It examines what factors exist in the Australian Film Industry to commit workers to the industry despite the existence of inhibiting factors.

This study finds eight career commitment factors which work to maintain worker commitment to the industry. These factors – job satisfaction, self-esteem, Hollywood factor, collegiality, autonomy, cost of leaving, volition and roles states – work individually and in combination to provide worker equity and thus facilitate career commitment in the Australian Film Industry.

This research makes a contribution to knowledge in several ways. Firstly, the research fills a large gap in the research literature, as very few organisational researchers have studied the film industry in general, and the Australian industry in particular. Fewer still have examined career commitment. Secondly, the research provides valuable insight into the role of career commitment for film workers. Together these provide practitioners and academics with a clear and focused understanding of the role of

career commitment, and its effect on workers in the Australian Film Industry. Thirdly, this research provides some practical guidance for managers in the Australian Film Industry that may assist them to develop better working relations with their crew in improving performance on the film set. Finally, this research demonstrates the strengths of using grounded theory for qualitative analysis in a organisational area of study. Through the application of this research method the study found a basic social process which was an area of concern to the participants and which led to the development of a substantive theory – that is Career Commitment in Film Production in the Australian Film Industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my two supervisors – Associate Professor Michael Zanko and Dr. George Kriflik – for their guidance and support during the process of this journey. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the patience and endurance of Michael Zanko who has seen me through two Theses and has shared the burden of my endeavours now for the better part of a decade.

In addition, I would like to thank the members of the Australian Film Industry whose help and support were invaluable components of this work. Without exception, these film workers went out of their way to render me assistance. I would like also like to thank Mr. David Sharpe and Film Illawarra, and Dr. Nina Kirsch, who all helped me kick start the project and build the empirical momentum needed to complete this Thesis.

Career Commitment in Film Production in the Australian Film

Industry – A Study Using Grounded Theory

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
AUTHORS PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO THIS TOPIC	12
<i>Chapter One</i>	13
INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 Introduction	13
1.2 Aims and Purpose	14
1.3 Significance.....	15
1.4 Context and Background.....	17
1.4.1 Sources of Empirical Data	22
1.5 Thesis Structure.....	24
<i>Chapter Two</i>	26
RESEARCH DESIGN	26
2.1 Introduction	26
2.2 The Evolution of Qualitative Research Methods.....	28
2.3 Assumptions of Inquiry.....	30
2.3.1 Ontology.....	31
2.3.2 Epistemology	31
2.3.3 Human Nature	33
2.3.4 Methodology	33
2.4 Qualitative Research Paradigms	34
2.4.1 The Modernist Paradigm.....	35
2.4.2 The Interpretivist/Constructivist Paradigm.....	36
2.4.3 The Postmodernist Paradigm	37
2.5 The Location of Grounded Theory	39
2.6 Research Design.....	43
2.7 Grounded Theory	52

2.7.1	What is Grounded Theory?	53
2.7.2	Why Grounded Theory?.....	57
2.7.2.1	Case Study Method	58
2.7.2.2	Ethnography	59
2.7.2.3	Phenomenology	61
2.7.2.4	Grounded Theory	62
2.7.3	Why Glaserian Grounded Theory?	63
2.7.4	Qualitative versus Quantitative Methods?	65
2.7.5	How Does Grounded Theory Work?	66
2.7.6	Research Design Using Grounded Theory?.....	75
2.8	Summary	77
<i>Chapter Three</i>		79
THE APPLICATION OF GROUNDED THEORY		79
3.1	Introduction	79
3.2	The Role of the Researcher	81
3.2.1	Researcher Background and Biases	82
3.2.2	Field Observation	84
3.2.2.1	Background	85
3.2.2.2	Issues	85
3.2.3	Pilot Interviews	89
3.2.3.1	Background	90
3.2.3.2	Issues	91
3.3	The Major Study	93
3.3.1	Initial Interviews	95
3.3.1.1	Design of Questions	98
3.3.2	Open Coding	100
3.3.3	Memoing	103
3.3.4	Constant Comparison and Abstraction.....	106
3.3.5	Results from the Initial Interviews.....	110
3.3.6	Second Set of Interviews.....	112
3.3.7	Results from the Second Set of Interviews	115
3.3.8	Reflection and Abstraction.....	117
3.3.9	Eureka	118
3.3.10	The Core Category	127

3.3.11	Third Set of Interviews.....	129
3.3.12	Results from the Third Set of Interviews	132
3.3.13	Densification of Core Category	133
3.3.13.1	Development of the Theoretical Codes.....	136
3.3.14	Fourth Set of Interviews.....	136
3.3.15	Conclusion of Interviews	137
3.4	Reliability and Validity	138
3.4.1	Degree of Fit	139
3.4.2	Functionality	140
3.4.3	Relevance	140
3.4.4	Modifiability	141
3.4.5	Constant Comparison	141
3.4.6	Verification	143
3.5	Data Management	143
3.6	Ethics and Confidentiality.....	148
3.7	Summary	149
	<i>Chapter Four</i>	151
	CAREER COMMITMENT – THE PROCESS	151
4.1	Introduction.....	151
4.2	Context – Description of the Australian Film Industry.....	153
4.2.1	Management.....	153
4.2.1.1	Pre-Pre-Production.....	155
4.2.1.2	Pre-Production	157
4.2.1.3	Film Production.....	160
4.2.2	Employment	166
4.2.3	Labour Utilisation	168
4.3	The Basic Social Process	168
4.3.1	Career Commitment – Conceptual Theory	169
4.3.2.1	Inhibitors	173
4.3.2.2	Enablers.....	180
4.4	Summary	192
	<i>Chapter Five</i>	195
	LITERATURE REVIEW – COMMITMENT.....	195
5.1	Introduction.....	195

5.2	Origins of Commitment	196
5.3	Three Types of Commitment – The Meyer and Allen Typology	203
5.3.1	Continuance Commitment	204
5.3.2	Affective Commitment.....	206
5.3.3	Normative Commitment	209
5.4	Foci of Commitment	216
5.4.1	Organisational Commitment	219
5.4.2	Job Commitment	221
5.4.3	Career Commitment.....	224
5.5	Antecedents and Consequences of Career Commitment	232
5.5.1	Antecedents.....	232
5.5.1.1	Locus of Control	245
5.5.1.2	Length of Service	246
5.5.1.3	Job Satisfaction	246
5.5.1.4	Collegiality	247
5.5.1.5	Feedback and Support.....	247
5.5.1.6	Role States.....	248
5.5.1.7	Autonomy.....	249
5.5.1.8	Remuneration	249
5.5.2	Consequences.....	252
5.6	Summary	258
	<i>Chapter Six</i>	261
	DISCUSSION	261
6.1	Introduction.....	261
6.1.1	Antecedents of Career Commitment in the Australian Film Industry ...	261
6.1.1.1	Job Satisfaction	264
6.1.1.2	Self Esteem	265
6.1.1.3	Hollywood Factor	269
6.1.1.4	Collegiality	270
6.1.1.5	Autonomy.....	272
6.1.1.6	Cost of Leaving	273
6.1.1.7	Volition	274
6.1.1.8	Role States.....	275
6.1.1.9	Remaining Antecedents	276

6.2	Summary	278
<i>Chapter Seven</i>		279
CONCLUSION		279
7.1	Introduction	279
7.2	Summary of Research – Major Findings	279
7.2.1	Grounded Theory	280
7.2.2	The basic social process	281
7.2.3	Commitment Literature	282
7.3	Recommendations	284
7.4	Achievement of Research Aims	286
7.5	Areas for Future Research.....	286
7.6	Limitations and Delimitations.....	289
7.7	Implications for Practitioners	290
REFERENCES.....		293

List of Table and Figures

Figure 2.1 A Conceptual Model of Paradigmatic Alternatives.....	32
Figure 2.2 Crotty's Research Method	45
Figure 2.3 Denzin and Lincoln's Research Method	47
Figure 2.4 Sarantako's Research Design	49
Figure 2.5 Comparison of Conventional Research Methods	56
Figure 2.6 Theoretical Coding Example: "The Six C's"	70
Figure 2.7 Constant Comparison	71
Figure 2.8 The Process of Grounded Theory	75
Figure 2.9 The Research Design	76
Table 3.1 Table of Transcripts Used	94
Table 3.2 Initial Set of Questions.....	97
Figure 3.1 Coding: An Extract from an Interview with John	102
Figure 3.2 Memoing: a Reflection Following the First Two Interviews	105
Figure 3.3 Process of Abstraction	107
Figure 3.4 Results from the First Two Interviews	111
Table 3.3 Questions for Second Set of Interviews.....	113
Figure 3.5 Results from the Second Set of Interviews.....	115
Figure 3.6 A Processual Model of Encouraging Optimum Performance	118
Table 3.4 The Third Set of Interviews	131
Figure 3.10 The Family of Theoretical Codes Used.....	134
Figure 4.1 The Process of Commitment in the Australian Film Industry.....	152
Figure 4.2 The Stages of Production.....	154
Figure 4.3 Film Production	161
Figure 4.4 The Process of Commitment in the Australian Film Industry (Enlarged). ..	172
Figure 5.1 The Involvement Continuum.....	199
Table 5.1 Foci of Commitment	217
Figure 5.2 A Framework for Job Commitment and Organisational Commitment ...	224
Table 5.2 Meta-Analysis of the Antecedents of Commitment.....	237
Table 5.3 Research Papers on Career Commitment.....	241
Table 5.4 Significance of Proposed Antecedents and Correlates	242
Table 5.5 Antecedents which Affect Career Commitment	251
Figure 6.1 A Synthesis of the Antecedents of Career Commitment in the AFI	262

AUTHORS PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO THIS TOPIC

- 1. Jones, M. and C. Kirsch (2004). The Road of Trials: Management Concepts in Documentary Film Production In Australia. 9th Australian International Documentary Conference, Fremantle, Western Australia.**
- 2. Jones, M. (2005). "'Lights... Action... Grounded Theory': Developing an understanding for the management of film production." Rhyzome 1(1).**
- 3. Jones, M., G. Kriflik and M. Zanko (2005). Grounded Theory: A theoretical and practical application in the Australian Film Industry. Qualitative Research Conference 2005, Johor Bharu, Malaysia.**
- 4. Jones, M., G. Kriflik and M. Zanko (2005). Worker Commitment in the Australian Film Industry. Student Research Conference, Waikato, NZ.**
- 5. Jones, M., G. Kriflik and M. Zanko (2005). Understanding Worker Motivation in the Australian Film Industry. Australia and New Zealand Academy of Management, Canberra.**
- 6. Jones, M., M. Zanko and G. Kriflik (2006). On the Antecedents of Career Commitment. Australia and New Zealand Academy of Management, Rockhampton.**
- 7. Jones, M. (2006). "Putting Action into Sociotechnical Systems Theory – a proposed analysis of the Australian Film Industry using START". Transformational Tools for the 21st Century, Rockhampton.**
- 8. Alony, I., G. Whymark, and M. Jones (2007). "Sharing Tacit Knowledge: A Case Study in the Australian Film Industry". Informing Science Journal 10: 41-59.**
- 9. Jones, M. and I. Alony (2007). "Tacit Knowledge Sharing in Creative Industries - A Case Study of the Australian Film Industry". Journal of Visual Arts Practice.**
- 10. Jones, M. (2007). Using Software to Analyse Qualitative Data. Malaysian Journal of Qualitative Research 1(1):64-76.**
- 11. Jones, M. and I. Alony (Forthcoming: 2007). "Approaches to Qualitative Research – A Review ". Practising Qualitative Research. Ed: Yusoff, M.**
- 12. Jones, M., G. Kriflik and M. Zanko (Forthcoming: 2007). Using Grounded Theory in Qualitative Research: A theoretical and practical application. Practising Qualitative Research Yusoff, M.**